

Message Text

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12

ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 AID-20 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IGA-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR OCON ECAFE

SUBJ: 29 TH SESSION ECAFE: MEKONG COORDINATING COMMITTEE:

INFORMAL SESSION ON POSSIBLE MCC ROLE IN POST- WAR
RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN INDOCHINA

1. MEETING WAS CALLED BY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF MCC TO EXPLORE IDEAS AND REVIEW TENTATIVE LISTING OF PROJECTS COMPILED BY THE MCC ENTITLED " IDEAS FOR POST- WAR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT". MEETING WAS CHAIRED BY GVN COMMITTEE MEMBER TUAN, AND WAS HELD ON COMPLETELY INFORMAL PLANE WITH VIEWS SOLICITED ON A PERSONAL BASIS AND NOT RECORDED OR INTERPRETED AS REFLECTING NATIONAL POLICIES OF THE PARTICIPANTS. THE TENTATIVE LISTING COMPILED BY THE MCC IS THE SAME AS THAT LEFT BY VAN DER OORD DURING HIS VISIT TO AID/ W IN DECEMBER.

2. NOTEWORTHY POINTS WHICH EMERGED FROM THE MCC MEMBER COUNTRY VIEWS WERE: A) THE PROJECTS COMPILED BY THE MCC ARE IN VARYING DEGREES INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OR RECONSTRUCTION PLANS OF THE THREE INDOCHINA STATES. ALL MCC ACTIVITIES LISTED FOR THE GKR ARE INCLUDED IN THAT COUNTRY' S NATIONAL RECONSTRUC-
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TION SCHEME; THE RLG HAS THE MCC PROJECTS INTEGRATED IN ITS DEVELOPMENT PLAN; GVN RECONSTRUCTION PLANS ENCOMPASS ABOUT EIGHTLY PERCENT OF THE ACTIVITIES LISTED. B) THE COORDINATION OF POSTWAR DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDOCHINESE PENINSULA WOULD BE ASSURED BY USING THE MEKONG COORDINATING COMMITTEE GIVEN ITS SUCCESS TO DATE AS THE ONLY MULTINATIONAL, FULLY OPERATIONAL ORGANIZATION ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN PROJECT PLANNING AND EXECUTION IN ALL THREE COUNTRIES. C) IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER YET- TO- BE- FORMED COALITION GOVERNMENTS IN THE INDOCHINA COUNTRIES WILL OBTAIN SUFFICIENT CONSENSUS FROM ALL FACTIONS TO ENDORSE PLANNED MCC ACTIVITIES. THE FEELING WAS THAT ANY UNCERTAINTY IN THIS REGARD SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO INHIBIT ONGOING ACTIVITIES AND PLANS; THE MCC HAS CARRIED ON ITS WORK DESPITE GOVERNMENTAL TURNOVERS AND POLITICAL TURMOIL OF THE PAST DECADE, AND IS RECOGNIZED BY ALL POLITICAL FACTIONS IN THESE COUNTRIES AS BEING APOLITICAL. D) WITHIN THE CURRENT LISTING ARE PROJECTS OF HIGH IMPACT REQUIRING MINIMAL ENGINEERING STUDIES AND/ OR UPDATING; WHILE THESE CAN BE FURTHER DELINEATED FROM LONG-RANGE ACTIVITIES FOR THE SAKE OF CLASSIFYING THEM AS " RECONSTRUCTION" PROJECTS, IT MUST BE KEPT IN MIND THAT WITH MINIMAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT HAVING BEEN MADE IN THIS AREA DURING THE PAST THIRTY YEARS, ATTEMPTING TO DISTINGUISH RECONSTRUCTION FROM DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES WAS VIEWED BY THE MCC MEMBERS AS LARGELY AN ACADEMIC EXERCISE.

3. NOTEWORTHY POINTS IN VIEWS EXPRESSED BY PARTICIPANTS FROM DONOR COUNTRIES WERE: A) THE NETHERLANDS PARTICIPANTS VOLUNTEERED THE INFORMATION THAT THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY APPROPRIATED FUNDS FOR POST WAR AID TO INDOCHINA WITH THE ONLY ATTENDANT STIPULATIONS BEING THAT SUCH ASSISTANCE BE REQUESTED AND USED ACCORDING TO THE WISHES OF THE RECIPIENT COUNTRIES, AND THAT IT BE COORDINATED WITH OTHER DONORS. THEY WERE STILL AWAITING THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTIONS BY OTHER DONORS TO EFFECT SUCH COORDINATION. LACK OF SUCH ANNOUNCEMENTS HAS TO DATE PRECLUDED THE NETHERLANDS FROM USING THESE FUNDS. B) THE NETHERLANDS STATEMENT EVOKED A SOMEWHAT SIMILAR PRONOUNCEMENT FROM THE JAPANESE, THAT THEY TOO WERE AWAITING TO COORDINATE GOJ POSTWAR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE WITH OTHER DONORS. THE JAPANESE PARTICIPANTS ADDED THAT THE ORGER OF PRIORITIES OF MEKONG ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE REVIEWED PERIODICALLY SINCE ADJUSTMENTS AMONG THESE WITH WHATEVER CONCURRENT SHIFTS IN COORDINATION AMONG DONORS SUCH ADJUSTMENTS WOULD REQUIRE WOULD BE TIME CONSUMING.

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NOTE: IT WAS APPARENT THAT THE NETHERLANDS AND JAPANESE ARE AWAITING SOME ANNOUNCEMENT OF USG INTENTIONS IN A POSTWAR MULTINATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO INDOCHINA, AND THAT LACK OF ANY INDICATION OF USG INTENTIONS TO DATE IS THE MOST CONSPICUOUS ABSENT PIECE IN THE MULTILATERAL FRAMEWORK THAT TRADITIONAL MCC DONORS ARE TRYING TO ASSEMBLE. (THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY; NEW ZEALAND AND THE USG WERE THE OTHER OBSERVERS PRESENT). THE COMMENTS OF THE USG OBSERVERS INVITED TO THE MEETING WERE LIMITED TO A STATEMENT THAT THE US HAD NO OBSERVATIONS TO MAKE AT THIS TIME. END NOTE.

C) THE MEETING CLOSED WITH SUGGESTIONS MADE TO THE MCC EXECUTIVE AGENT THAT TWO MEETINGS BE CONVENED IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS: THE FIRST TO BE A MEETING OF THE MCC MEMBER NATIONS TO REVIEW INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL PRIORITIES ASSIGNED MEKONG PROJECTS TO ASSURE THAT ALL AGREE TO A COORDINATED SCHEME OF POSTWAR DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE MEKONG BASIN; THE SECOND MEETING TO BE OF ALL TRADITIONAL DONOR NATIONS TO ELICIT INTENTIONS OF EACH AND HOPEFULLY INITIATE SOME CORR DINATIVE EFFORT.

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